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OLD NEW YORK: City

READ BEFORE THE

New York Historical Society,

FEBRUARY 4TH, 1862,

BY

BENJAMIN ROBERT WINTHROP, Esq.

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From Valentine's Manual, 1862.

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NEW YORK:

EDMUND JONES & CO., PRINTERS AND STATIONERS,

No. 26 JOHN STREET.

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## Old New York.

READ BEFORE THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FEBRUARY 4,  
1862, BY BENJAMIN ROBERT WINTHROP, ESQ.

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AMONG the many memorable benefits conferred on this Society by an honored and beloved associate, the venerable and lamented FRANCIS, the student of our local history will undoubtedly regard the fifty-third anniversary discourse as the most valuable and enduring.

I think every member of the Society, who hears that respected name mentioned in this connection, will recall the genial presence, the cheerful countenance, beaming with an expressive benevolence, and the sympathetic tones in which that true-hearted antiquarian depicted the events, the scenery, and the actors in the life of our city, fifty years ago.

Whatever was touched by his master-hand is hallowed in our memories. My purpose is to fill up, so far as I am able, in the brief space allotted to me, some few interstices left in his interesting memorial of the past.

Although, in comparison with most of the great cities of the world, New York is still in the freshness of youth, yet her records, going back beyond the period of two centuries, may perhaps justify me in applying the term "Old New York" to the few observations with which I propose to trouble the Society at this time.



We have a municipal historian in the venerable Clerk of the Common Council, whose love of research and accuracy of details give to his writings a well-deserved authority.

Mr. VALENTINE carries back the discovery of Manhattan Island to the year 1525, while Hudson, usually regarded as the "discoverer," first saw the Highlands of Navesink in September, 1609. Hudson thought it "a very good land to fall in with, and a pleasant land to see." The native Indians did not covet the intimate acquaintance of the English sailors; and after an exploration of the river, on which he conferred his name, Hudson abandoned the fruits of his discovery.

Holland, from her position necessarily commercial in her interests and in the character of her people, soon gathered up the raveled threads of the English enterprise, and wove them into the web of a great colonial success. The Dutch were speedily at work to secure the benefits of their acquisition. Their first superstructure was a block-house, erected in 1626.

Manhattan Island had been selected as the headquarters of the Dutch West India Company, and the commercial city, looming up in the future, was to be the "New Amsterdam" of a new continent.

The Society all know, or can readily learn from the elaborate details of Mr. Brodhead's History of the State of New York, that under the administrations of Van Twiller and Kieft, especially of the latter, the affairs of the Dutch government in New Netherlands became seriously embroiled with those of the English authorities, and the Dutch Government was in imminent danger of losing its influence, and the control of its possessions on the American continent.





In May, 1647, a new phase was given to the public affairs by the landing of Peter Stuyvesant on the Island of Manhattan, as the Chief Director of the Government of Nieuw Nederland.

The administration of Governor Stuyvesant continued for sixteen years. The determined vigor and sturdy integrity of the Dutch character were stamped upon the whole record of his public career. He led the Dutch troops in battle with dauntless bravery, and his wisdom and honesty appear on every page of his civil administration.

In 1664, the civil power departed from the Dutch dynasty. The name of New Amsterdam gave place to that of New York, and the city, now become the commercial metropolis of a continent, passed quietly under the control of the English Crown.

Nicolls, the first English ruler, thus speaks of the city of which he had just taken possession : " The best of all his Majesty's towns in America ; within five years the staple of America will be drawn hither, of which the brethren of Boston are very sensible." Nicolls, if not a good or great ruler, had at least the merit of a sagacious forecast.

Governor Stuyvesant's name is connected with the history and the interests of the city of his love by other ties than those which belong to his character as a ruler. I think I may, without infringing any rule of delicacy or propriety, justly ascribe to the influence and example of his civil life the traditions which have come down to us of the sturdy honesty, the patriotic spirit, and the incorruptible integrity of the municipal rulers ; the industry, the frugality, and the probity which marked the character of the people of the city of New York, as it came out of the hands of our Dutch progenitors.

1864. The first of the year was a very dry one, and the  
season was generally unfavorable for the crops. The  
winter was very cold, and the spring was very dry.  
The summer was very hot, and the autumn was very  
dry. The crops were generally poor, and the  
livestock was very thin. The people were very  
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poor, and the country was very desolate.

I cannot claim for the Dutch that they were a fast-moving people; they considered long over all their projects of improvement; many pipes were smoked in silence before the decision came; if regrets followed, they sprung from what had been omitted, and not from what had been done. Theirs was, at least, a prudent philosophy.

Deputy Governor Nicolls foresaw competition between New York and Boston. The two cities were rivals, just and honorable rivals, for the supremacy of commerce, for more than a century and a half. In this our day, while the rivalry for the crown of commerce has ceased, a loyal, earnest and undying emulation has succeeded in all that is great and useful in science and art, humanity and letters, and devoted love of country.

If New England has indeed been outstripped in the race with New York for commercial enterprise and prosperity, we must not fail to concede one point, namely: That it is to a strong infusion of a new element of character, particularly the New England element, that we owe much of the vast increase of the moral and material power of our city, the growth of the last half century. New England men have cast freely into the common stock of the community their enterprise, intelligence, ingenuity, industry, commercial integrity, and unconquerable perseverance. With such a commingling of moral and social elements, where should be the wonder that a city should rise in power and greatness with a rapidity that has no parallel in the history of the world?

Pardon me, Mr. President, that I have so long detained you by these crude suggestions from the recollections of the old New York of my early days, with which I pro-

The first part of the book is devoted to a general  
introduction of the subject. The author discusses the  
importance of the study and the scope of the work.  
The second part of the book is devoted to a detailed  
description of the methods used in the study. The  
author discusses the various techniques employed and  
the results obtained. The third part of the book is  
devoted to a discussion of the results of the study.  
The author discusses the various findings and the  
conclusions drawn from them. The fourth part of the  
book is devoted to a discussion of the applications  
of the study. The author discusses the various ways  
in which the results of the study can be applied to  
the study of the subject. The fifth part of the book  
is devoted to a discussion of the future of the study.  
The author discusses the various ways in which the  
study can be further developed and the various  
problems that need to be solved. The sixth part of  
the book is devoted to a discussion of the history of  
the study. The author discusses the various ways in  
which the study has developed over the years and  
the various contributions that have been made to it.  
The seventh part of the book is devoted to a  
discussion of the bibliography. The author discusses  
the various sources of information used in the study  
and the various ways in which they have been used.  
The eighth part of the book is devoted to a  
discussion of the index. The author discusses the  
various ways in which the index has been compiled  
and the various ways in which it can be used.

pose to occupy, for a short time, the attention of the Society, having to speak in especial reference to that portion of the city which once composed the family estate of Governor Stuyvesant. I could scarcely avoid recurring to his connection with its early history and progress.

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The changes that have occurred, within my memory, in the city at large, almost defy my own belief. The scenes of a moving panorama scarcely pass with greater rapidity before the vision. It is far from an easy task to recall the objects of local interest which have so suddenly disappeared. Time and the inexorable demands of commerce and population and progress are sweeping away all the land-marks associated with the traditions and memories of a past generation. As a people, we have very little veneration for antiquity. Mansions which were beautiful in the eyes of our ancestors have lost their fine proportions in the judgment of posterity, and must give way to the more attractive models of modern architecture. The tiny Holland brick, the golden hue of which had such fascination for the eyes of the Dutch burghers of New Amsterdam, have long been displaced by the ruddy-tinted Collaberg, or the smooth vermilion blocks of which the City of Brotherly Love has long been so proud. To these succeeded the stately fronts adorned with the sculptured brown free-stone, whose sombre countenance has more recently been enlivened by the admixture of palaces of marble, pure as the product of Italian quarries.

Our streets, which once meandered in their crooked ways through green suburban groves, have been straightened and widened under despotic mathematical rules,





until all the romance and the better part of the memory of our youth have disappeared. Let us seize the little that remains of the past, and picture it to the mind of history, ere it disappears forever from our view.

The map which lies before me, and of which I shall ask the Society to accept a copy, delineates a portion of the property which once formed the estate of Governor Stuyvesant. It was in his day a suburban retreat, far removed from the glitter of society and the tumults of business, and in its embowered recesses he found his best relief from the labors and cares of office. The "Bouwery lane" brought him within the confines of the city, and over its unpaved roads the stately coach bore him to and from his official duties. The house in which he dwelt was situated about one hundred and twenty-five feet west of St. Mark's Church; its site occupied a portion of the church-yard, and extended over to what is now the north side of Tenth street. A portion of the foundation remained, until a very few years since, on the spot where now stands the house adjoining St. Mark's church-yard on the west. The mansion was burned by the British troops in 1777. The two copper coins which I lay upon the table were recovered from these ancient ruins, while excavating for the foundation of the house in Tenth street. One relic of the Governor's farm has become familiar to the present generation. The pear-tree still standing on the north-east corner of Third avenue and Thirteenth street, and which bore fruit in 1861, tradition tells us was brought by him from Holland and set out on his farm in 1647.

A church was erected on the estate by Governor Stuyvesant, which fell, from natural decay, many years ago. Upon the site of the ruins of the old church was





OLD NEW YORK.  
"The Bouwery."

From the Map Presented to the N. Y. Historical Society by  
Gen. Robert Weather, Esq., Feb. 7, 1862.



erected the present St. Mark's. Beneath the original building, and still remaining under the present structure, is the family vault of the Stuyvesants. From the construction of this vault and the position of the entrance, I have come to the conclusion that the *western* gable of the old church must have stood about ten or twelve feet from the eastern gable of the present edifice. My reason for this conclusion is, that what appears to have been an entrance has been closed up by brick work, while the rest of the vault is of solid masonry.

The cemetery of the present St. Mark's Church lies between First and Second avenues and Eleventh and Twelfth streets. It was conveyed to the church by Mr. Petrus Stuyvesant, a lineal descendant of the Governor, by deed bearing date in the year 1803. One of the conditions upon which this property was to be held by the church is in the following words :

"And upon the further trust they, the said Rector, Church Wardens and Vestry, their successors and assigns, shall at any time hereafter permit and suffer the interment of any person who now is or has been the slave of the said Petrus Stuyvesant, and the children of all such persons, in the said burial-ground, without the charge of any mortuaries, burial fee, or other ecclesiastical duties whatsoever."

Near the entrance to the cemetery, and about ninety feet from the spot on which you sit, Mr. President, is the portion set apart for the interment of the slaves and their descendants, and where the remains of many of those faithful servitors have mouldered away to their original dust. In the cemetery stands a simple gravestone, erected by a few of the descendants of Petrus Stuyvesant, of the present generation, which bears the following inscription





# Sacred

TO THE MEMORY OF

Mrs. MARY BAY,

FAMILIARLY CALLED

MAMMY MARY,

BORN

SEPTEMBER 14TH, 1747,

DIED

FEBRUARY 14TH, 1843.

SHE WAS BORN NEAR THIS SPOT,

BENEATH THE ROOF OF

GERARDUS STUYVESANT,

Where she dwelt until his death, in 1777.

*After that event*

*She remained the faithful servant and friend*

*Of the same family,*

*And thus passed her long life of near a century*

*Among the same kinsfolk,*

*And in the same neighborhood*

*In which she was born.*

*She has now gone to dwell*

*Where the distinctions of this World are unknown,*

*And, being found worthy,*

*To reap rewards*

*Which the proudest may be happy*

*To share with her.*

---

*Nata Serva in Christo vivit in libera.*

# THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT TIME  
BY  
JOHN H. COLEMAN  
OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I.  
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE YEAR 1780  
PUBLISHED BY  
JOHN H. COLEMAN  
OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
1857

I have been present and "assisted" at the interment in this cemetery of very many of the old Stuyvesant slaves; and, while recalling innumerable acts of kindness received at their hands in my infancy and youth, have dropped tears of sincere sorrow while witnessing their humble sepulchral rites.

I call up to memory now, though so many years have elapsed, the names of the persons of these faithful adherents of the family altar. Well do I remember "Old Jonno" and "Mammy Isabel;" "Daddy Dick" and "Mammy Dinah;" of "Mammy Sarah," and "Bessie;" of "Mary" and "Bowery John," and "Lucy" and "Hannah;" but especially do I call to mind dear old "Mammy Mary," in regard to whom I have an incident to relate:

Almost at the close of the life of this good old soul, she took me to her closet, and, with a great deal of mystery, brought forth, nicely wrapped in a white napkin, a brick which she had taken from the Governor's mansion, and, coming into her possession, had been treasured for a lifetime. The "specimen brick" of the story-teller usually excites a jest; but, in my mind, no sense of ridicule can attach to a relic guarded with such jealous devotion, and which connects us with seven generations of the past. I ask permission to place it among the collections of the Society.

The old parsonage of St. Mark's, a further benevolent gift of Petrus Stuyvesant, remained in the sacred use to which it had been dedicated, until its removal became inevitable by the opening of the new streets about the year 1832.

At the commencement of the present century, a little settlement had grown up on the Stuyvesant farm. It



took, naturally, the familiar name of the "Bowery Village." The school-house stood near the "Two-Mile Stone," about the present St. Mark's place, a little north of Tompkins Market. The school was kept in the upper story, and the lower floor was occupied by the *fourth* Methodist church. The *first* of these churches was in John street; the *second*, in what is now Chrystie street; the *third*, in Duane street. All are still standing, and remain devoted to the same spiritual objects, save the fourth. In this connection I may mention that the Rev. Henry J. Feltus, D. D., who attained great eminence as an eloquent divine of the Episcopal Church, while rector of St. Stephen's, was originally a "local preacher" of the Methodist persuasion, and frequently officiated in the Bowery church, as did also the popular young preacher, Summerfield. It was not an infrequent practice of the latter clergyman to hold his religious exercises in the private houses of the citizens of this neighborhood.

While the people of "Old New York" had no Central Park, through the broad drives of which to exercise their prancing steeds, and over the artfully prepared frozen lake to glide on the precarious skate, yet they were not without these aids to healthful exercise and youthful amusement.

The drives were over smoothly kept roads, unvexed with cobble pavements, and the skating was on ponds of nature's own preparing. "Lispenard's" and "Burr's" had their surfaces crowded with the young and active skaters, while "Stuyvesant's Pond," more remote, was sought by those who desired more room, and did not shun a walk to obtain their much-prized pleasure. "Stuyvesant's" comprised the spacious opening between

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 1, 1801. It contains a report on the state of the Union and the progress of the government during the year 1800. The letter is signed by James Madison, who was the Vice President at the time.

2. The second part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the Treasury, dated January 1, 1801. It contains a detailed account of the financial state of the government and the measures taken to improve it. The report is signed by Alexander Hamilton, who was the Secretary of the Treasury at the time.

3. The third part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the Navy, dated January 1, 1801. It contains a detailed account of the naval operations of the government and the measures taken to strengthen the fleet. The report is signed by John Adams, who was the Secretary of the Navy at the time.

4. The fourth part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the War, dated January 1, 1801. It contains a detailed account of the military operations of the government and the measures taken to improve the army. The report is signed by Henry Knox, who was the Secretary of the War at the time.

5. The fifth part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the Interior, dated January 1, 1801. It contains a detailed account of the land and mineral resources of the United States and the measures taken to develop them. The report is signed by Thomas Mifflin, who was the Secretary of the Interior at the time.

6. The sixth part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the State, dated January 1, 1801. It contains a detailed account of the foreign relations of the United States and the measures taken to maintain peace and stability. The report is signed by John Jay, who was the Secretary of the State at the time.

7. The seventh part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the Education, dated January 1, 1801. It contains a detailed account of the state of education in the United States and the measures taken to improve it. The report is signed by Thomas Jefferson, who was the Secretary of the Education at the time.

8. The eighth part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the Agriculture, dated January 1, 1801. It contains a detailed account of the state of agriculture in the United States and the measures taken to improve it. The report is signed by Thomas Jefferson, who was the Secretary of the Agriculture at the time.

9. The ninth part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the Commerce, dated January 1, 1801. It contains a detailed account of the state of commerce in the United States and the measures taken to improve it. The report is signed by Thomas Jefferson, who was the Secretary of the Commerce at the time.

10. The tenth part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the Marine, dated January 1, 1801. It contains a detailed account of the state of the marine industry in the United States and the measures taken to improve it. The report is signed by Thomas Jefferson, who was the Secretary of the Marine at the time.



Thirteenth and Fifteenth streets and the First avenue and the East River.

The site of the "Bowery House," familiar to many of our elder citizens as the residence of Nicholas William Stuyvesant, and also that of "Petersfield," occupied until the year 1825 by the late Peter Gerard Stuyvesant, will be found indicated on the map. These houses were both erected before the year 1765. The exact date I am unable to state.

"Ortley's," a famous establishment in that day on the East River, the resort of young men fond of fishing or sailing, will also be found on the map. There are some circumstances connected with the tract of property embraced within the limits of this map, which it may not be out of place to recall. As first drawn, the streets indicated bore the names of all the Stuyvesant family. In other countries this would have proved an enduring memorial, consecrated to an affectionate remembrance of departed relatives. In our city, and especially in our times, street names have little significance for posterity. Time and change have swept away many that were associated with historical events and persons, until finally we have come to know our streets and avenues as the dwellers in prison cells and hospital wards are known—by numbers, and not by names.

The lines, as well as the names on the Stuyvesant map, have been obliterated, with the single exception of Stuyvesant street, and a portion even of that small remnant has been diverted without authority. Other designs have been adopted, more in unison with the general plan of city improvements. The black lines indicate the streets as laid down on a map "drawn" from actual survey by Casimir Th. Goerck and Joseph



Fr. Mangin, in 1803. The red lines show the streets now existing, in accordance with the plan of the upper portion of the city, laid out by the Board of Commissioners appointed by the Legislature in 1807, of which Gouverneur Morris was chairman and Simeon Dewitt and John Rutherford members.

Your attention, Mr. President, will doubtless be attracted to the spot indicated as the site of the building in which we are assembled to-night. How appropriate that the Historical Society should have found a permanent resting-place upon soil, the history of which is so intimately connected with the origin and progress of our city !

The Dutch dynasty opens its grounds to the descendants of those who came in with the British rulers. The immigrant seeking a new home, whether he comes from the Ocean Islands, from Continental Europe, or from the coasts of the far Eastern seas, finds here a common centre around which gather the lovers of history from every clime. Science and truth, civilization and loyalty : these are the bonds which unite the students of history as friends of our common humanity.

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